

**Water Quality Cooperative Agreements/ Grants**  
**US EPA Region 9 (AZ, CA, HI, NV, Pacific Islands)**  
**FY 2005 Requests for Proposals**

**Overview**

US EPA Region 9 (AZ, CA, HI, NV, Pacific Islands) is soliciting proposals for the Water Quality Cooperative Agreements Grants Program. The purpose of these funds is to conduct and promote the coordination and acceleration of investigations, training, demonstrations, surveys and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction and elimination of water pollution. Specifically, we are seeking unique and innovative proposals that address TMDL development, animal feeding operations, impacts of wet weather flows and water quality trading in the region. Funds awarded through this program may not be used to support continuing program operations such as ongoing administrative, program, research or other ineligible costs. This is an initial solicitation.

Tribal Nations in Region 9 are encouraged to apply under a separate solicitation (contact Loretta Vanegas at [vanegas.loretta@epa.gov](mailto:vanegas.loretta@epa.gov) for more information).

**Important Dates:**

March 1, 2005 -- Initial Proposals must be received by EPA.  
April 2005 -- Initial proposals identified for funding will be requested to submit a formal application package.  
May 1, 2005 -- Grant application and workplan must be submitted to EPA.  
June 30, 2004 – Final awards processed

Please note that EPA may modify the schedule at any time.

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**I. Funding Opportunity Description**

The purpose of this grant program is to provide funding for unique and innovative projects that address the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) Program, specifically, TMDL development, animal feeding operations, impacts to wet weather flows and water quality trading. Priorities and example projects are further defined below.

This program falls under Goal 2 (Clean and Safe Water), Objective 2 (Protect water Quality), Sub-objective 1 (Improve water quality on a watershed basis), of the strategy that EPA is using to meet the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act. Special emphasis will be on projects that enhance the ability of the regulated community to deal with non-traditional pollution problems in priority watersheds.

Tribal Nations in Region 9 are encouraged to apply under a separate solicitation (contact Loretta Vanegas at [vanegas.loretta@epa.gov](mailto:vanegas.loretta@epa.gov) for more information).

## **US EPA Region 9 Priorities**

We are seeking unique and innovative projects that may include, but are not limited to, the example projects listed under each priority area below.

### **TMDL Development**

Projects that result in *completed* TMDLs will receive high priority under this RFP. Proposals should clearly describe how the project fits in the State water quality agency TMDL strategy.

- Conduct impairment characterization studies to identify sources
- Develop model for TMDL development and assignment of load allocations
- Complete significant components of TMDL including defining assimilative capacity, outlining allocations, addressing critical conditions and defining the spatial and temporal extent of impairment.
- Demonstrate adaptive measures to minimize loads and attain standards.
- Design and implement adaptive measures to minimize pollutant loads and attain water quality standards.
- Develop, test and implement methods for documenting improvements in water quality and measuring environmental results at a TMDL or watershed scale consistent with Sub-objective 2.2.1 of EPA's Strategic Plan, including report card metrics, condition assessments, and trend analyses.

### **Animal Feeding Operations**

Projects that result in nutrient management planning, prevention and containment of wastewater runoff discharge, and related education and outreach will receive priority under this RFP.

- Demonstrate or study the application of manure and wastewater for specific climates, agricultural practices and soils in the Western States.
- Demonstrate innovative irrigation practices that prevent runoff or leaching
- Demonstrate innovative manure collection techniques (other than scrape or flush)
- Develop and demonstrate innovative or alternative technologies to treat/process wastewater or manage manure.
- Demonstrate methods for water conservation and reclamation.

### **Impacts to Wet Weather**

Projects that demonstrate results in water quality improvements and/or reduction of negative public health impacts will receive priority under this RFP.

- Measure or develop tools to determine the effectiveness of storm water BMPs.
- Measure or develop pilot storm water discharge and ambient water monitoring techniques for gauging water quality improvements and public health impacts.

- Develop and pilot sample performance measures for use by small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s) to incorporate into storm water management plans.
- Provide tools to help permittees select options and overcome barriers in storm water pollution prevention plan development.
- Develop, test and implement methods for documenting improvements in water quality and measuring environmental results at a stormwater program or watershed scale consistent with Subobjective 2.2.1 of EPA's Strategic Plan, including report card metrics, condition assessments, and trend analyses.

### Water Quality Trading

Projects that provide flexibility, environmental benefits and reduced costs outside of the traditional regulatory approach to achieve water quality goals on a watershed basis will receive priority under this RFP.

- Demonstration project that provides support to facilitate watershed-based permitting and trading

## **II. Award Information**

EPA Region 9 Water Division intends to award an estimated \$850,000 to eligible applicants through assistance agreements ranging in size from \$50,000 up to \$150,000 for Water Quality Cooperative Agreements/Grants. From the Initial Proposals received, EPA estimates that 6 to 12 projects may be selected to submit full applications. Both initial and renewal proposals will be accepted for consideration. Proposals must address the priorities outlined in this RFP to be considered.

## **III. Eligibility Information**

US EPA Region 9 is soliciting proposals from States, Tribes, local governments, universities, non-profits and other eligible entities interested in applying for Federal assistance for Water Quality Cooperative Agreements (CFDA 66.463) under the Clean Water Act section 104 (b) (3).

Assistance will be targeted to applicants who have successfully demonstrated the ability to carry out Federal grant programs. No matching funds are required. However, applicants may provide a non-federal cash or in-kind match to indicate the organization's commitment to completing the project. Costs incurred prior to grant award will not be reimbursed. Funding may only be provided for specific projects. Please note funds awarded through this program may not be used to support continuing program operations such as ongoing administrative, program, research or other ineligible costs as outlined in 40 CFR Parts 30 and 31.

## **IV. Initial Proposal Guidelines – Format and Content**

Initial proposals should be limited to 5 pages, single-spaced. Full application packages should not be submitted at this time. Applicants should be sure to address the relevance of their project to the selection criteria outlined in section V. The following format should be followed:

1. Name of project.

2. Contact information (Individual and organization name, address phone, fax and email).
3. Is this a continuation of a previously funded project? If yes, please provide the number and status of the current grant or cooperative agreement.
4. Proposed Budget:
  - a) Identify all federal and other sources of funding for the project including the recipient cost-share.
  - b) Clearly identify categories for funding distribution (supplies, contractual, equipment, staff, etc).
  - b) Identify applicant matching contributions. Cost-sharing is not required but will contribute to the strength of a proposal.
5. Project Description:
  - a) Describe of the project area
  - b) Describe how the project relates to one of the regional priorities identified in Section I.
  - c) Describe components of the project
  - d) Describe how the project fits with relevant planning and water quality management goals.
  - e) Describe any partnerships, community support etc.
6. Outcome/ Result Tracking and Reporting:
  - a) Plan for tracking, measuring, and reporting progress toward achieving expected outcomes/outputs. Proposals should address the applicant's past performance in documenting the achievement of expected outcomes/outputs including, if applicable, satisfactory explanations of why outcomes/outputs were not achieved. Provide list of public agencies that have previously awarded grants to applicant and documentation that proves past performance with those awards was successful.
  - b) Describe past performance in filing timely progress reports and final technical reports that document the achievement of expected outcomes/outputs or a satisfactory explanation of why the outcomes/outputs were not achieved.
  - c) Describe ability to specify and measure the expected environmental outputs/outcomes and performance measures to be accomplished as a result of the project.
7. Outreach, Communication and Information Transfer:
  - a) Plan for distributing project results to the public and interested parties. This plan should include a detailed description as to how the applicant proposes to ensure the transfer of knowledge gained by the project.

Please send three (double-sided printing is encouraged) copies of the IPs to:  
Tina Yin, Program Coordinator  
U.S. EPA Region 9 (WTR-3)  
75 Hawthorne St.  
San Francisco, CA 94105

**Initial proposals must be received by EPA by March 1, 2005. Proposals received after this date will not be reviewed or considered for funding under this program.**

#### **V. Initial Proposal Review and Ranking Criteria**

EPA will award Water Quality Cooperative Grants/Agreements on a competitive basis. The following criteria will be considered on a 100 point scale:

- 45 points: How well how the project relates to one of the regional priorities identified in Section I. Project benefits, technical feasibility etc.
- 10 Points: Leverage of other resources (e.g., cost share, participation by other organizations) and cost effectiveness of the proposal.
- 5 points: Experience with EPA-funded grant programs, and, where applicable, past performance with EPA grants.
- 20 points: How well the applicant has defined a plan for outcome result tracking and reporting, applicant's past performance, and ability to specify results as outlined in section 6 of the proposal guidelines.
- 20 points: Communication plan for distributing results of the project. How well the plan transfers knowledge gained as a result of the project to relevant and interested communities.

In addition to scoring each proposal, the selection committee will convene to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal using their best professional judgment and knowledge. The committee will submit its recommendations to the Water Division Director who will make the final award determination. Selected organizations will be notified and requested to submit a full application.

#### **VI. Award Administration**

Initial proposals that are selected for continuance in the process will be sent an application kit for funding. These applicants will be invited to submit a detailed workplan and the completed application for funding. Receipt of an application kit is not a guarantee of funding. Deadlines must be met and the work plan must be approved by the EPA Project Officer for funding to occur.

Regulations governing the award and administration of Water Quality Cooperative Agreements: 40 CFR part 30 (for institutions of higher learning, hospitals, and other non-profit organizations) and 40 CFR part 31 and 40 CFR part 35, subparts A and B (for States, local governments, and interstate agencies).

Quarterly project status reports and al Financial Status Reports will be required. Quarterly reports should describe project activities and provide the EPA Project Officer with information about project development. The Financial Status Report must accurately account for all federal funds expended and identify appropriate use of federal funds.

Disputes: Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at:

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1371.htm>. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting Tina Yin at (415) 972-3579.

Confidentiality: Applicants must clearly mark information they consider confidential and EPA will make confidentiality decisions in accordance with Agency Regulations at 40 CFR, Part 2, Subpart B.

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and to not make any awards.

## **VII. Agency Contact**

For additional information, please contact

Tina Yin, Program Coordinator

Phone: (415) 972-3579

Fax: (415) 947-3549

Email: [yin.christina@epa.gov](mailto:yin.christina@epa.gov)